

THIRD TEEM STAMPEDE PREVENTED

89

June 1,
1908.

To Senator Lodge: I enclose a letter of which Hitchcock has a copy. It is to be shown quietly to any of the Taft delegates who show the slightest symptoms of going for me, for you will see that it is written for use with the two Taft delegates from West Virginia. Just this morning I have spoken to Hopkins, of Illinois; and Campbell, of Kansas, telling them that they were to join with you and Hitchcock to see that no stampede for me was to gather headway for a moment, I am exceedingly anxious on every account, my own no less than Taft's, to avoid the necessity of another public utterance, which I think would do real damage and make us both look rather ridiculous. So I hope that you and Hitchcock can use the letter I enclose with any delegates who seem at all doubtful, and I should think it would straighten them out. I think the best plan to follow would be not to show this letter to any person unless both you and Hitchcock agree that it is really necessary. Be extremely careful that it is regarded as absolutely secret, and under no circumstances is reference to it to be made in the press. I fear that if it does get out it will be put in the position of protesting too much.

The National Convention met at Chicago on June 10, 1908, and the first and only ballot for Presidential nominee was taken on June 18. I arrived in Washington on the

morning of that day from the Isthmus of Panama, where I was in the Government service as Secretary of the Isthmian Canal Commission. As I spent most of the day with the President I had peculiar facilities for observing' Ms bearing at the time. Immediately after leaving Washington a few days later I wrote an account of what I had witnessed and from it I make the following quotations: '

" About eleven o'clock I called on the President and was admitted at once to his private office, where I remained till 1.30 P. M., when I went to luncheon with him. He was then in constant telegraphic touch with the party managers at Chicago, and was kept thoroughly informed as to what was